



ENTER God's presence

Psalm 46 (selected verses)

- ¹ God is our refuge and strength,
an ever-present help in trouble.
- ² Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way
and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,
- ³ though its waters roar and foam
and the mountains quake with their surging...
- ⁷ ...The Lord Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress...
- ¹⁰ ...He says, "Be still, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth."
- ¹¹ The Lord Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress.

Pray: Gracious God, As we gather around your Word today, quiet our hearts and widen our vision. In this season of Advent, remind us that our hope is not wishful thinking or the product of our own strength, but the gift of your faithfulness. Lord, let your Spirit open our eyes to the hope that comes from you alone. In Jesus name, Amen



SHARE life together

1. What are your highs and lows since you last met?
2. When you think about a 'peaceful' location or setting what do you imagine?
3. What has been the most 'peaceful' moment of your week this week?
4. How do you find 'peace' among the busyness of the Christmas season?

'Shalom' is a Hebrew word, still often used by Jewish people as a greeting or parting blessing. It's also used often in the Old Testament and it is usually translated into English as the word 'peace'. But the way 'shalom' was understood in the Old Testament, and is still understood by Jewish people today, is very different to how we often think and talk about peace.

Week beginning:
Monday 1st December 2025

Worship series:
Christmas is...
#2 Peace



VERSE for the week

**"I am the Lord's servant,"
Mary answered. "May
your word to me be
fulfilled."**

Luke 1:38



REMEMBER this week

**Peace is not defined
by what is missing,
but by trusting the
comfort of God's
presence in every
moment.**

It seems that these days, peace is all about the absence of something. We have 'peace and quiet' when there is an absence of noise. We say there is peace between nations when there is an absence of war or conflict. We have peace in our heart or in our lives when there is an absence of worry or stress. For most of us today, peace is defined by what's missing.

But 'shalom' is different. Shalom was sometimes used as a word to describe God. It comes from the Hebrew root word "Shalem" which most closely translates into English as the idea of 'wholeness' or 'completeness'. Greeting someone with the word 'shalom' is speaking a blessing on them and wishing them wholeness and a sense of rightness and 'peace' within themselves, with others, and with God. This kind of 'peace' is not an absence of anything but, as we will see in a moment, is about having something more; more complete, more restored, and more relational.

Read **Isaiah 11:1,6-10** and **Luke 1:26-38** [HERE](#) or in your own Bible.

5. **What verse/concept/teaching in these readings caught your attention and what was challenging/confronting/comforting about them for you?**
6. **What stands out to you when you hear Isaiah describe God as a shepherd who carries and gently leads His people?**
7. **In the Isaiah passage, what images or descriptions most stand out to you as a picture of 'shalom' or 'wholeness' rather than just the absence of conflict or violence?**
8. **Look at both passages. What examples do you see of God bringing something more – restoration, fullness, or completeness – rather than just removing something?**
9. **When you read the angel's greeting to Mary ("the Lord is with you"), what do you observe about her initial reaction?**



GROW deeper

As we begin to look more closely at these passages, it becomes clear that the peace God promises—and the peace announced at Christmas—is far richer than our usual ideas of calm, comfort, or conflict-free living. Isaiah's vision invites us to imagine a world reordered under God's rule, where creation itself becomes whole again. Luke's account shows God stepping into ordinary life with a presence that doesn't remove uncertainty but transforms it. Together, they point us toward a peace that is rooted not in circumstances but in God's character and His presence with us.

10. **Isaiah 11 describes a world where natural enemies live at peace and justice is restored. What does this reveal about the kind of peace God intends to bring—and how does it expand or challenge your usual picture of "peace"?**
11. **In Luke 1, Mary is troubled by the angel's message but ultimately responds with trust. What do you think enabled her to move from disturbance to obedience, and what might this show us about the connection between peace and faith?**
12. **Both passages suggest that God's peace doesn't start by changing circumstances but by establishing His presence and purpose. How have you experienced this in your own life—or where do you long to experience it now?**
13. **Mary is told, "The Lord is with you." Isaiah envisions a world "filled with the knowledge of the Lord." How does the presence of God—rather than the absence of problems—reshape the way we understand and pursue peace today?**



LIVE purposefully

MAKE IT REAL:

As we sit with these passages, we begin to see that God's peace is not just a grand Biblical theme but a real and present gift meant to reshape our everyday lives. Shalom isn't only something God intends for the world someday—it's something He desires to grow in us now, in the very places where we wrestle with worry, conflict, or incompleteness.

14. **We often feel like we need to 'find' some peace and quiet for ourselves in the hustle and bustle of modern life. But if peace is really something that is a gift, something that we have to be given rather than to hunt down or find for ourselves, how would your life look different if your focus became 'giving' peace to others instead of looking for it for yourself?**
15. **How 'peaceful' does your life feel at the moment? How might you 'add more Jesus' to your life rather than seeking less burden or responsibility to improve your sense of peace or 'shalom'?**
16. **In last week's reading from Matthew 5, Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God". How can you be a peacemaker or a 'shalom bringer' in your life this week?**

Plan your weekly devotions or [download the Church Central app](#) for the daily **LifeWay Devotions**



PRAY intentionally

- **Praise the Father**, for the confident hope we can have in his faithfulness to all his promises.
- **Thank Jesus**, the Prince of Peace for leaving his peace and shalom for all those who follow him.
- **Ask the Holy Spirit** to help you receive the gift of God's shalom in your life and to readily pass that gift on to others.
- Pray for all of LifeWay as we continue to grow into God's plans and purpose for us as his people as we live his love, share his hope with all, and grow in grace together.



BLESS one another

You might like to address one person in your group and make the sign of the cross on their forehead or on the palm of their hand as you say...

[Name], May Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, bring you shalom this Christmas. Amen.